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22 JAN 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Chairman, Key West Task Force

SUBJECT : Key West Coverage from Key Building

As agreed, I have discussed the ramifications of shifting Key West Bureau operations to FBIS Headquarters with [redacted], DC/WSS, and [redacted] C/Communications Center. The main points broached:

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1. Putting bureau operations in Headquarters would require that a certain portion of the present bureau file be edited in Headquarters, either in whole or in part by the Wire, and punched for filing to the BBC and lateral consumers by the Communications Center. Coordination messages with Panama Bureau would also have to be drafted, punched and filed by WSS/Commo.

2. Not all processed material would necessarily have to be filed on a real-time basis to BBC and lateral consumers; some could be handled by WSS on a time-available basis.

3. If we eliminate present bureau publications wordage, the residual daily average of 2,000 words could probably be accommodated by Wire editors and communicators. In reality, however, the average is not the rule.

4. The Wire is generally staffed by two editors each on day and evening watches, one on the midwatch. This does not allow sufficient fat for absorbing unusual editing or coordination workloads imposed by Havana and other Caribbean coverage. Thus any day's processing exceeding the 2,000-word average is likely to impose an unmanageable burden on both WSS editors and communicators.

5. Castro speeches and other special events pose an obvious problem. These are likely to occur at any time, day or night; often there is little or no advance warning. Under these circumstances:

- a. How do we insure sufficient monitorial manpower to cope?
- b. How can Wire editors suddenly absorb the additional editing chore and the need for prompt and often complex coordination with Panama Bureau?
- c. Depending on where the duty monitor is physically located, how does he get coordination messages, FYI's, etc. to the Wire when he is tied to his position?

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d. How can communicators handle these coordination messages, which could be competing with Wire material for prompt and immediate handling?

e. Would Wire editors leave for Daily Report editing monitor copy not run on the Wire? If so, another monitor would have to respond to IR queries--not an insurmountable obstacle, but not an ideal way to function either.

f. Wire editors would have to function as bureau editors, handling incoming Panama coordination traffic, consulting with monitors on modes of processing, running back to monitors to clarify any rough spots in copy, etc.

g. Would outgoing copy to lateral consumers have to be proof-read? That could put another burden on Wire or IR editors.

h. With the duty monitor preoccupied with radio coverage, someone from WSS would likely have to make the necessary calls to bring in additional monitorial help for unscheduled events.

6. The primary problem with an unscheduled leader speech or other major development is that of bringing sufficient monitor manpower to bear quickly. In the field, this poses little difficulty; in the Washington metropolitan area, it would be quite a different story. There is a clear danger that we could fall down badly on our handling of Cuban leader speeches and other material of prime interest to consumers.

7. Adding an editorial slot to the Wire and/or a communicator slot to Commo Center would not provide the additional help needed. The added personnel are required when the file reaches above-average levels, but such instances cannot be predicted in advance.

8. The Communications Center is not in a good position to undertake more punching. It already has responsibility for repunching some incoming IR material for lateral consumers, TRIMTS articles for field dissemination (6,000-10,000 words per shot), outgoing cable, admin and service messages (45-50 per day) and ad hoc analysis notes.

9. Even staffing sufficiently for special coverage known in advance would play havoc with Wire and Commo Center scheduling, use of overtime would largely be precluded because of the lack of adequate advance warning.

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Special Assistant, Operations Group

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cc: C/Operations Group
IC/WSS
C/C. Ctr.

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